

Chapter 22

Good morning and thank you for joining us. Would you please turn in your bibles to Deuteronomy chapter 22?

Last week in chapter 21 we saw how it so clearly pointed to Jesus on the cross. Well, this morning's study isn't quite as exciting or dramatic as we're going to cover more than 35 various laws as we go through chapters 22, 23, and 24. We'll see everything addressed from crossdressing, to rape, to welfare, to divorce. Pleasant topics huh? But through these verses we'll also see the kindness, mercy, and righteousness of God.

Remember the nation is about to enter the promised land, but before they do, God institutes these laws for the nation to govern themselves and deal with the sin that will eventually arise.

The title of this morning's message is Grateful for Jesus!

LETS PRAY

All sin falls into 2 categories. Sins of commission, and sins of omission. A sin of commission is doing what we shouldn't do. But a sin of omission is NOT doing something when we should have done something.

The first part of Deuteronomy 22 is all about sins of omission...

1-3

1 "You shall not see your brother's ox or his sheep going astray, and hide yourself from them; you shall certainly bring them back to your brother. 2 And if your brother is not near you, or if you do not know him, then you shall bring it to your own house, and it shall remain with you until your brother seeks it; then you shall restore it to him.

3 You shall do the same with his donkey, and so shall you do with his garment; with any lost thing of your brother's, which he has lost and you have found, you shall do likewise; you must not hide yourself. Finders keepers, losers weepers is not a biblical principle.

4 "You shall not see your brother's donkey or his ox fall down along the road, and hide yourself from them; you shall surely help him lift them up again. God's heart is that His people get involved when needs arise. We're not to turn a blind eye.

Verse 5 deals with a subject that didn't seem culturally relevant in America 100 years ago, but sadly its very pertinent for our culture today.

5 "A woman shall not wear anything that pertains to a man, nor shall a man put on a woman's garment, for all who do so are an abomination to the LORD your God. When God created humanity, He created male and female. Gender was God's idea. He created the sexes equal, but different. Men and women play diverse roles in family life. This is why God forbids anything that blurs these distinctives.

Obviously, fashion is always changing thru the years. But whether you're living in 1400 BC or 2000 AD, men should look like men, and women should look like women.

Today's modern culture celebrates and elevates those who are "pushing the boundaries of gender". But God's expectations are clear in His word.

Now the next couple verses deal with animal rights

6 "If a bird's nest happens to be before you along the way, in any tree or on the ground, with young ones or eggs, with the mother sitting on the young or on the eggs, you shall not take the mother

with the young; 7 you shall surely let the mother go, and take the young for yourself, that it may be well with you and that you may prolong your days. Some Jewish commentators considered verses 6-7 to be the least of all the commandments – be kind to a bird. And here’s what’s amazing: God is so gracious that even the least of His commands carries a significant blessing-kindness to animals for Israel prolongs occupation in the land.

8 “When you build a new house, then you shall make a parapet (barrier) for your roof, that you may not bring guilt of bloodshed on your household if anyone falls from it. God commanded that a railing be made for the rooftop, so folks were protected against falling.

And this is a reminder to all of us to make sure we have guardrails in place in our households. Parents are you sure your home is protected from the evils of pornography and child predators?

Now the next section of scripture describes laws of separation that the Israelites were to follow.

9-12

9 “You shall not sow your vineyard with different kinds of seed, lest the yield of the seed which you have sown and the fruit of your vineyard be defiled.

10 “You shall not plow with an ox and a donkey together.

11 “You shall not wear a garment of different sorts, such as wool and linen mixed together.

12 “You shall make tassels on the four corners of the clothing with which you cover yourself.

When God commands Israel in these verses, it isn't so much for the sake of the combinations themselves, but so Israel would not resemble their neighbors.

And the NT also gives us strict prohibitions about combining unlike things as well. Combining the sacred institution of communion with gluttonous feasting is forbidden in 1 Corinthians chapter 11.

The combining of a Christian and a non-Christian in marriage is also forbidden.

Speaking of marriage, the next section gives laws of sexual morality

13 “If any man takes a wife, and goes in to her, and detests her, 14 and charges her with shameful conduct, and brings a bad name on her, and says, ‘I took this woman, and when I came to her I found she was not a virgin,’ The man accuses his new bride of not being a virgin

15 then the father and mother of the young woman shall take and bring out the evidence of the young woman’s virginity to the elders of the city at the gate. According to custom, a Jewish woman would first be intimate with her husband upon a special cloth, which would collect the small drops of blood which were accepted as evidence of the young woman's virginity. This blood-stained cloth would then become the property of the married woman's parents, who kept it as the evidence of the young woman's virginity.

This may seem bizarre, but there are still some parts of the world where this custom is still practiced

16-19

16 And the young woman’s father shall say to the elders, ‘I gave my daughter to this man as wife, and he detests her. 17 Now he has charged her with shameful conduct, saying, “I found your daughter was not a virgin,” and yet these are the evidences of my

daughter's virginity.' And they shall spread the cloth before the elders of the city.

18 Then the elders of that city shall take that man and punish him; 19 and they shall fine him one hundred shekels of silver and give them to the father of the young woman, because he has brought a bad name on a virgin of Israel. And she shall be his wife; he cannot divorce her all his days. If the parents could produce the evidence, then the man was convicted of wrongfully accusing his wife, and he was dealt a punishment and fine.

20 "But if the thing is true, and evidences of virginity are not found for the young woman, 21 then they shall bring out the young woman to the door of her father's house, and the men of her city shall stone her to death with stones, because she has done a disgraceful thing in Israel, to play the harlot in her father's house. So you shall put away the evil from among you. If the accusations were founded, the woman was to be executed by stoning. This death sentence was pronounced because she played the harlot and disgraced Israel.

22 "If a man is found lying with a woman married to a husband, then both of them shall die—the man that lay with the woman, and the woman; so you shall put away the evil from Israel. Two people caught in the act of adultery both received the death penalty. This is why the entire scene in John 8 with the woman taken in adultery was so suspicious. If the woman they threw at Jesus' feet was taken in the act of adultery where was her partner?

Now this next section is a bit tough. Verses 23-29 give governing principles for rape victims and perpetrators.

23 "If a young woman who is a virgin is betrothed to a husband, and a man finds her in the city and lies with her, 24 then you shall

bring them both out to the gate of that city, and you shall stone them to death with stones, the young woman because she did not cry out in the city, and the man because he humbled his neighbor's wife; so you shall put away the evil from among you. If the woman didn't cry out for help, it implied that the sex was consensual.

25-27

25 "But if a man finds a betrothed young woman in the countryside, and the man forces her and lies with her, then only the man who lay with her shall die. 26 But you shall do nothing to the young woman; there is in the young woman no sin deserving of death, for just as when a man rises against his neighbor and kills him, even so is this matter. 27 For he found her in the countryside, and the betrothed young woman cried out, but there was no one to save her. Out in the countryside there wouldn't be anyone around to hear the cries for help. So, the victim was to be blameless, and the perpetrator executed.

28 "If a man finds a young woman who is a virgin, who is not betrothed, and he seizes her and lies with her, and they are found out, 29 then the man who lay with her shall give to the young woman's father fifty shekels of silver, and she shall be his wife because he has humbled her; he shall not be permitted to divorce her all his days. If a man had pre-marital sex with a woman, then he must pay a fine and he was obligated to marry the woman whom he had relations with.

30 "A man shall not take his father's wife, nor uncover his father's bed. This was the same thing Paul had to rebuke the Christians at Corinth for. 1 Corinthians 5: 1 It is actually reported that there is sexual immorality among you, and such sexual immorality as is not even named[fn] among the Gentiles—that a man has his father's wife! The Corinthians allowed the sin in the church

Chapter 23

1 “He who is emasculated by crushing or mutilation shall not enter the assembly of the LORD. Now there is some dispute among theologians as to what the meaning of the phrase ‘entering the assembly of the Lord’ means. Most theologians believe this isn’t talking about being part of the nation of Israel, but rather holding public offices or being in leadership, and later on being in the temple itself. Here in verse 1 eunuchs are restricted.

2 “One of illegitimate birth shall not enter the assembly of the LORD; even to the tenth generation none of his descendants shall enter the assembly of the LORD. An illegitimate birth could’ve been out of an incestuous relationship between Jews; or mixed marriages between the people of Israel and their pagan neighbors like we see in the books of Ezra and Nehemiah.

3-5

3 “An Ammonite or Moabite shall not enter the assembly of the LORD; even to the tenth generation none of his descendants shall enter the assembly of the LORD forever, 4 because they did not meet you with bread and water on the road when you came out of Egypt, and because they hired against you Balaam the son of Beor from Pethor of Mesopotamia,[fn] to curse you. 5 Nevertheless the LORD your God would not listen to Balaam, but the LORD your God turned the curse into a blessing for you, because the LORD your God loves you. 6 You shall not seek their peace nor their prosperity all your days forever.

Remember in Numbers 23-24, on 4 different occasions Balaam opened his mouth to proclaim curse on Israel, and each time God changed the curse into a blessing.

This reminds us of what Joseph said to his brothers, **Genesis 50:20** “But as for you, you meant evil against me; but God meant

it for good, in order to bring it about as it is this day, to save many people alive.

Folks, no matter what trials or tribulations befall us, they have first been sifted through the sovereignty of God. And we can take comfort that He will use the hardships we face and work them for good. **Romans 8:28 And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose.**

7-8

7 “You shall not abhor an Edomite, for he is your brother. You shall not abhor an Egyptian, because you were an alien in his land. 8 The children of the third generation born to them may enter the assembly of the LORD. Remember, Jacob’s brother Esau was the father of the Edomites. Therefore God commands the Hebrews not to hate them.

And notice the kindness in verse 7. Even though they had been slaves to Egypt for 400 years, it didn’t excuse mistreating the Egyptians.

9-11

9 “When the army goes out against your enemies, then keep yourself from every wicked thing. 10 If there is any man among you who becomes unclean by some occurrence in the night, then he shall go outside the camp; he shall not come inside the camp. We saw this in Leviticus, the nocturnal emissions made them ceremonially unclean.

11-14

11 But it shall be, when evening comes, that he shall wash with water; and when the sun sets, he may come into the camp.

12 “Also you shall have a place outside the camp, where you may go out; 13 and you shall have an implement among your equipment, and when you sit down outside, you shall dig with it and turn and cover your refuse.

14 For the LORD your God walks in the midst of your camp, to deliver you and give your enemies over to you; therefore your camp shall be holy, that He may see no unclean thing among you, and turn away from you. When nature called and they needed to relieve themselves, they were to go outside the camp, and take care of the business with a shovel.

15 “You shall not give back to his master the slave who has escaped from his master to you. 16 He may dwell with you in your midst, in the place which he chooses within one of your gates, where it seems best to him; you shall not oppress him. They weren’t to return a runaway slave because he might’ve been abused or mistreated. Again, highlighting the differences in Biblical servitude versus the horrors of American slavery.

17 “There shall be no ritual harlot^[fn] of the daughters of Israel, or a perverted^[fn] one of the sons of Israel. Ritual harlots were temple prostitutes. In the wicked nations there were women who sold sex to raise funds for the priests and the temple of the idol.

The perverted one in verse 17 was a homosexual prostitute.

Sadly in 1 Kings 15 and 2 Kings 23, we’re told that the perverted persons (male prostitutes) were expelled from Israel. This means that for some period of time before they were expelled, they were allowed to operate by the leadership of Israel.

18 You shall not bring the wages of a harlot or the price of a dog to the house of the LORD your God for any vowed offering, for both of these are an abomination to the LORD your God. The

money these prostitutes made were never to be used under the guise of advancing God's kingdom.

19 "You shall not charge interest to your brother—interest on money or food or anything that is lent out at interest. 20 To a foreigner you may charge interest, but to your brother you shall not charge interest, that the LORD your God may bless you in all to which you set your hand in the land which you are entering to possess. There's an old saying among Jews that asks "Why did God create Gentiles?" Because "somebody has to pay full retail price."

21-23

21 "When you make a vow to the LORD your God, you shall not delay to pay it; for the LORD your God will surely require it of you, and it would be sin to you. 22 But if you abstain from vowing, it shall not be sin to you. " 23 That which has gone from your lips you shall keep and perform, for you voluntarily vowed to the LORD your God what you have promised with your mouth. " As Ecclesiastes 5:5 put it, "Better not to vow than to vow and not pay."

24 "When you come into your neighbor's vineyard, you may eat your fill of grapes at your pleasure, but you shall not put any in your container. 25 When you come into your neighbor's standing grain, you may pluck the heads with your hand, but you shall not use a sickle on your neighbor's standing grain. This is the law Jesus and His disciples were operating under when they plucked heads of grain, rubbing them in their hands and ate them in Luke 6. You'll recall they were accused by the Pharisees of breaking the Sabbath, but did you ever wonder why they weren't accused of stealing grain? Because it was allowed here in these verses.

God demanded Israel to be generous, if someone was hungry, grab a handful, but you couldn't store it and bring the grain home.

Chapter 24 begins by God instituting rules regarding divorce

1-4

1 "When a man takes a wife and marries her, and it happens that she finds no favor in his eyes because he has found some uncleanness in her, and he writes her a certificate of divorce, puts it in her hand, and sends her out of his house, 2 when she has departed from his house, and goes and becomes another man's wife, 3 if the latter husband detests her and writes her a certificate of divorce, puts it in her hand, and sends her out of his house, or if the latter husband dies who took her as his wife, 4 then her former husband who divorced her must not take her back to be his wife after she has been defiled; for that is an abomination before the LORD, and you shall not bring sin on the land which the LORD your God is giving you as an inheritance. It's interesting, the Hebrew word translated divorce has as its root the idea of "a hewing off, a cutting apart" - it is the amputation of that which is one flesh.

God's desire was never for divorce, but He did allow it if there was uncleanness.

As the years went on, the Jewish Rabbis twisted the word uncleanness and defined it as anything the wife did which might displease the husband. By the time of Jesus, some Rabbis taught that if a wife burned her husband's breakfast, he could divorce her.

This is why Jesus defined what uncleanness is in **Matthew 19 3**
The Pharisees also came to Him, testing Him, and saying to Him,
"Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife for just any reason?"

4 And He answered and said to them, “Have you not read that He who made^[fn] them at the beginning ‘made them male and female,’^[fn] 5 and said, ‘For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh’?^[fn] 6 So then, they are no longer two but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, let not man separate.”

7 They said to Him, “Why then did Moses command to give a certificate of divorce, and to put her away?”

8 He said to them, “Moses, because of the hardness of your hearts, permitted you to divorce your wives, but from the beginning it was not so. 9 And I say to you, whoever divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality,^[fn] and marries another, commits adultery; and whoever marries her who is divorced commits adultery.”

Now divorce isn't commanded in the case of sexual immorality, but it is allowed.

5 “When a man has taken a new wife, he shall not go out to war or be charged with any business; he shall be free at home one year, and bring happiness to his wife whom he has taken. The best way to protect against divorce is to strengthen the marriage.

Here a newlywed was allowed a year off from military duty – or any other kind of civil service to focus on his marriage and build a good foundation.

6 “No man shall take the lower or the upper millstone in pledge, for he takes one's living in pledge. Without two millstones you couldn't grind your grain. And without grain for bread, you couldn't eat. God prohibits taking a person's livelihood as collateral.

7-9

7 “If a man is found kidnapping any of his brethren of the children of Israel, and mistreats him or sells him, then that kidnapper shall die; and you shall put away the evil from among you.

8 “Take heed in an outbreak of leprosy, that you carefully observe and do according to all that the priests, the Levites, shall teach you; just as I commanded them, so you shall be careful to do. 9 Remember what the LORD your God did to Miriam on the way when you came out of Egypt!” In Numbers 12, Moses’ sister, Miriam, rebelled against her brother’s authority and God struck her with leprosy.

Now we studied the laws concerning the treatment of leprosy in Leviticus 13-14.

10 “When you lend your brother anything, you shall not go into his house to get his pledge. 11 You shall stand outside, and the man to whom you lend shall bring the pledge out to you. No illegal search and seizures were allowed.

Now the rest of the chapter illustrates the kindness which Israel was to show to others.

12 And if the man is poor, you shall not keep his pledge overnight. 13 You shall in any case return the pledge to him again when the sun goes down, that he may sleep in his own garment and bless you; and it shall be righteousness to you before the LORD your God. Kindness to the poor is righteousness before God.

14 “You shall not oppress a hired servant who is poor and needy, whether one of your brethren or one of the aliens who is in your land within your gates. 15 Each day you shall give him his wages, and not let the sun go down on it, for he is poor and has set his heart on it; lest he cry out against you to the LORD, and it be sin

to you. There was no OSHA in those days-servants and employees were to be treated fairly.

16 “Fathers shall not be put to death for their children, nor shall children be put to death for their fathers; a person shall be put to death for his own sin. Every person is responsible for their own sin. It doesn’t matter if your grandpa was a minister. Everyone of us is accountable before almighty God. **Romans 14:12 So then each of us shall give account of himself to God**

17 “You shall not pervert justice due the stranger or the fatherless, nor take a widow’s garment as a pledge. 18 But you shall remember that you were a slave in Egypt, and the LORD your God redeemed you from there; therefore I command you to do this thing. If Israel kept remembering how much God had done for them, it would make them more compassionate when dealing with others.

And this is a good practice for us around Christmas time when fuses run short and tempers run hot. Remember what the Lord has done for you! **2 Corinthians 5:21 For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.**

Let’s finish the chapter

19 “When you reap your harvest in your field, and forget a sheaf in the field, you shall not go back to get it; it shall be for the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow, that the LORD your God may bless you in all the work of your hands.

20 When you beat your olive trees, you shall not go over the boughs again; it shall be for the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow. 21 When you gather the grapes of your vineyard, you shall not glean it afterward; it shall be for the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow. 22 And you shall remember that you were a slave

in the land of Egypt; therefore I command you to do this thing.

This is how welfare was administered in Israel. After the harvest the poor could comb the fields for leftovers. It made the farmers to have a generous heart, and it made the poor to be active and work for their food. It made a way for them to provide for their own needs with dignity.

Wow a lot of laws covered this week wasn't there! And we may be tempted to think this isn't very applicable for us in our modern society.

But as we continue to study the OT, we see God's requirements. And the inescapable truth is we all fall short of God's requirements. Now you may not be a murderer, but Jesus said in **Matthew 5:21** 21 "You have heard that it was said to those of old, 'You shall not murder,[fn] and whoever murders will be in danger of the judgment.' 22 But I say to you that whoever is angry with his brother without a cause[fn] shall be in danger of the judgment. And whoever says to his brother, 'Raca!' shall be in danger of the council. But whoever says, 'You fool!' shall be in danger of hell fire

And we read about adultery, you may say well I've been faithful, I've never cheated on my spouse. But Jesus said in **Matthew 5:27** 27 "You have heard that it was said to those of old,[fn] 'You shall not commit adultery.'[fn] 28 But I say to you that whoever looks at a woman to lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart.

Folks these laws show us God's standard for us, and you and I and every single person falls short of this standard.

And that's where the cross of Jesus Christ comes in!